
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	L'Enfant Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Addresses:	Proposed Closing of a Public Street Bounded by Squares 492 and N-492	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	January 26, 2012	<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
S.O. Number:	S.O. 11-7194	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Andrew Lewis	<input type="checkbox"/> Conceptual Design
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Street Closing

The Office of the Surveyor has forwarded an application by the National Park Service (NPS) to close a portion of a public street bounded by Squares 492 and N-492. The specific street to be closed is Maryland Avenue, SW between Independence Avenue, SW and 6th Street, SW. The subject portion of Maryland Avenue, SW is a contributing element of the Plan of the City of Washington (L'Enfant Plan) and is, therefore, listed in the National Register of Historic Places and included in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites. Section 7-422(4) of the DC Code requires that the Mayor refer to the Historic Preservation Review Board any application "to close any street located on the L'Enfant Street Plan."

The stated purpose for the closure is to facilitate construction of the Congressionally-mandated memorial to President Dwight D. Eisenhower. For this reason, the NPS is also requesting that the closed street space be transferred to NPS jurisdiction. The memorial site, approximately 3.9 acres of the area to be closed, was identified by the National Capital Planning Commission in its Memorials and Museums Plan and has been, along with the design of the memorial itself, the subject of extensive consultation among the NPS, DC SHPO, NCPC, CFA and other parties in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The result of the Section 106 consultation will very likely be the execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to identify the agreed upon measures that will minimize and mitigate the adverse effects of the memorial on the L'Enfant Plan. The adverse effects most relevant to the proposed street closure include the placement of a few memorial elements (i.e. four columns and part of a "tapestry") within the outer edge of the 160' Maryland Avenue right of way, the alteration of the openness of the streets vista to and from the US Capitol, and the closure of the subject street to traffic. The MOA is currently in draft form and is expected to be finalized within the coming weeks. However, ongoing consultation suggests that the design of the memorial is in its near final form and that it is unlikely that any additional revisions will be incorporated to further minimize adverse effects to the L'Enfant Plan.

With regard to archaeology, the DC SHPO has been in consultation with the NPS and other relevant entities concerning effects on potential archaeological resources. A final report of the Phase IA archaeological study was received in May of 2011 which defined locations with historic and/or prehistoric archaeological potential. The draft MOA will likely require Phase IB archaeological testing if any of the identified areas are to be disturbed.

The DC Office of Planning has indicated its general concurrence for the proposed closing but maintains that the District of Columbia should adequately compensated for the loss of revenue that is currently generated from parking fees collected in area proposed for closure.

The staff recommends that the Board report to the Surveyor as follows:

- Although the proposed closure of the subject portion of Maryland Avenue, SW represents a significant alteration to the L'Enfant Plan, the Historic Preservation Review Board does not object to the street closing since it is necessary to facilitate the construction of Eisenhower Memorial.